



Q3 2013

Quarterly Newsletter

WWW.MIRLEESFIELDS.ORG.UK

First of all— a BIG THANK YOU!

We wanted to take a moment to thank each and every one of you who attended or helped to support our recent events on the fields. We have been truly inspired by the great response, positive feedback and genuine interest in helping to evolve the fields into a sustainable open space for the whole community to use and enjoy. It would appear that we are not alone!

The Nature Walks which took place in early August attracted 120 walkers (and a few more people coming to see what was going on!), and we had a great response to the consultation questions which were being presented.

Special mention to our Tour Guide Richard Gardner from Cheshire Wildlife Trust (CWT) for managing to keep his voice all afternoon!

We hope you found the walks

informative, I know some of our younger members enjoyed looking for creepy crawlies in the tree stumps! The general feedback from the walks was around the size and diversity of the plants and trees which we could access in such a short time. There is a lot more to discover, share and learn about. Hopefully some more 'nature walk' themed events in 2014 will help us to do this.

The 'Bat Walk' took place at the end of August and took us to a whole new level of uptake, whilst pushing our logistical planning to the max!

Over 160 people came on the walk, and armed with sonar bat detectors and some strong flash lights we managed to hear and see lots of bat activity! A special thank you to Brian from our Committee for allowing us to gain brief access to the anglers pond at the far side of the

fields—this was definitely where all the 'bat action' was at that night, and they really did put on a show for us! We also had some fantastic 'bat hats' being made prior to the walk and we hope everyone enjoyed the bat biscuits and mini tuck shop!

We have around 40 new contacts added to our email lists and Facebook group following on from the events—which is fantastic. **Please help us by continuing to spread the word and attend future events!** To see photos from both events please visit our website or our group on Facebook.

Working closely with MAN and CWT we hope to continue bringing fun and informative events to the fields throughout 2014—watch this space for further announcements!

If you have any ideas for events, or if you can spare some time/resources to help us plan/host future activities (no matter how big or small) please do get in touch—**we would love to hear from you!**

Keeping Safe on the Fields

Some of you may be aware of a reported assault which happened on the fields in July. The assault took place early one morning, and the victim was a young girl who was walking alone. The police have confirmed that a young adult male, with learning difficulties, who was already known to them, has been arrested following a description provided

by the victim.

We would urge **anyone** using the fields to follow some simple safety procedures -

If possible, don't walk alone

Take a torch if you are walking during dark hours

Always ensure someone knows where you are and what time you

should return

Take a mobile phone /personal alarm with you

Be aware of your surroundings and take notice of those walking near you

If you have any concerns about behaviour/safety on the fields please dial 101 for local police support.

Last chance to have your say...

We are in the final stages of our consultation work in partnership with CWT which we hope will be a driving force in the future shape of the fields.

We have collected hundreds of responses from a good cross section of the local community. With a combination of 'free text' answers and also some 'closed'

questions there is already a lot of great data to go through!

The final stage is an electronic version of the questions we posed at our events over the summer. We hope this will allow us to reach an even larger group, and also to include groups/individuals who provided email addresses as part of the initial consultation carried

out with the planning application for the brown field site some 3 years ago.

The electronic survey is being created using 'Survey Monkey' and will be available to complete in the New Year—watch this space for more details and the all important 'link'!

2013 AGM— 28th November — Great Moor Juniors

As we are fast approaching the end of 2013 (6 weeks till Christmas!) that means it is also time for our AGM.

More detailed information will be circulated w/c 17th November, but we wanted to provide a 'date for the diary' and encourage you to attend.

The meeting is only on for an hour, but we try to cram in as much as possible and this year we have a few important motions which will require votes in favour or against from the attendees.

We are aiming for a good blend of reflections/updates from 2013 and forward looking/thinking on what we would like to achieve in 2014.

We want to be very clear with all attendees that our AGM is the forum to discuss the strategic direction for MFAG, the local community and its relationship with MAN and CWT.

Following on from feedback following last years meeting, individual concerns or self

motivated questions will not be discussed in detail and we would encourage anyone with a query of this kind to send these through to committee to address at our regular face to face meetings with MAN and CWT.

These face to face meetings have been taking place through out 2013, and are in addition to adhoc email/telephone contact which means that MFAG maintain a very effective communications channel directly with MAN and their PR representatives.

We have a good working dialogue between MAN and CWT, and we will get you answers/updates—they may not always be the ones you or we might hope for - but we will do our best to resolve concerns and highlight relevant information.

There has also been several requests for the AGM to avoid 'going over old ground' with regards to historic issues or debates (where there is no new incentive to re-open them). This is an area we will fully support, especially at this exciting time for the fields when we are faced with so much opportunity, but at the same time crucial decisions to try

and achieve the best strategic open space for our local community (and beyond).

An agenda and supporting notes will be circulated pre event, so that we can 'hit the ground running' and make the most of this valuable time - it is only an hour, and from past experience attendees will know that this tends to fly by!

Minutes will be circulated after the meeting via email/website.

A suggested voluntary donation of £2 per attendee is being requested, to help cover the running costs of the AGM .

We hope that all attendees will take these points on board, and help us to deliver a positive meeting, with tangible outcomes and ways to move forward.

If you have specific questions or areas for discussion that you would like to hear at the AGM please email them to us at info@mirrleesfields.org.uk - and we will do our best to include them.

Local School visit to the fields

Three classes from Year Three at Great Moor Junior School enjoyed a trip to Mirrlees Fields in October.

The aim was to learn something about the history of the fields, the fishing pond and the factory.

Led by MFAG volunteers, we finished our little walk at Bramhall House.

The children said they enjoyed themselves, their teachers hope they learnt something and we hope their little legs were not aching too much!

We are currently working with MAN to set up a simple process to request access for walks/activities on the fields – so if you are involved in a local group (schools, nursery, scouts, brownies, cadets etc) and think this could be of interest to you please let us know.

It's good to talk!

Selected MFAG committee members (Chair and Communications Officer) and MAN representatives meet face to face every two months to discuss the fields. These regular meetings have provided a great corner stone for tackling local resident issues and com-

plaints, but also for discussing developments and securing permissive access for our events this summer. By collating and presenting our member issues in these meetings it is allowing us to have open and honest discussions, and working together to try

and find resolutions. Whilst we acknowledge that we can never please all the people all the time, we think it is definitely worth acknowledging just how far our relationship with MAN has come during 2013.

In other news

Boundary Fence Application—Ref: DC/050195. Still awaiting for a final decision from Stockport MBC.

Demolition on the Brown Site —is now nearing completion and MAN are currently completing the 'sales pack' which will be sent to developers in the New Year. We are keen to extend our good working relationship to any developers which invest in this site. We will keep you informed of any updates.

Dog Fouling— so we nearly got through a whole news letter without mentioning dog mess, but not quite! We would continue to encourage people to report dog fouling to the local authorities—complete with descriptions of owners/dogs.

We also have a few committee members who are going to try and 'highlight' this problem in key areas—let us know if you spot anything, and if you think it is helping!

Please do talk to us!
We are always keen to hear from you, any news, or views or ideas for the fields

info@mirrleesfields.org.uk